POLITICAL AND MUNICIPAL LEGISLATION IN 1898.*

Less than one-third of our American states hold legislative sessions during the even-numbered years. We should therefore look for fewer important enactments in 1898 than in 1897. The legislatures of Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Georgia meet annually, while those of Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Ohio and Virginia assemble in the spring of the even years. The present report covers also a special session of the general assembly of Illinois, held last year. Constitutional amendments are for the most part voted upon by the people at the regular elections held in even-numbered years, but those submitted in 1898 were fewer in number, and in most cases less important than those acted upon at the election of 1896.

Constitutional Legislation.—A general revision of the state constitution was last year adopted in Louisiana, but was rejected in Rhode Island. The main object sought in the southern state was to restrict the negro vote. A constitutional amendment framed for this purpose had been defeated at the polls in 1896. The most feasible plan seemed to be, therefore, to summon a convention to revise the constitution, and to allow that body to adopt a new fundamental law without popular vote. While the constitution of 1879 had been submitted to the people, it contained no provision making this necessary in case of a future general revision. Moreover, conventions in Mississippi and South Carolina had already, with the same end in view, set the precedent of putting their work into effect without submission to the electors, and even that in Delaware had recently done the

*Previous papers in this series will be found in the ANNALS for May, 1896, Vol. vii, p. 411, March, 1897, Vol. ix, p. 231 and March, 1898, Vol. xi, p. 174. Reference to these will help in understanding some of the enactments here described.

same. It is probably because the negroes of Louisiana did not fully appreciate the significance of the movement that the popular vote on the question of holding a convention was affirmative. The convention adjourned May 12, after declaring the revised constitution in immediate effect.*

The discrimination against the colored race in the electoral franchise is made by this instrument much more direct than in Mississippi and South Carolina. The educational test is established in more severe form than in any other state, for the voter is required himself to write out, unaided, in the presence of the officer, his application for registration, a somewhat elaborate document. As an alternative to this qualification the ballot is given to those who own property assessed at not less than $300—precisely as in South Carolina. But it is still further enacted that neither test shall be required of such persons as were voters in any state on January 1, 1867, nor of sons or grandsons of such persons nor of naturalized foreigners, provided they were on September 1, 1898, at least twenty-one years of age and had lived five years in the state. This gives the franchise to practically all white men, while excluding a large majority of the negroes. It seems questionable whether the courts will uphold a provision so obviously contrary to the spirit of the fifteenth amendment to the federal constitution. Still further, the right to vote at any election is lost by failure to pay for that year the poll tax of one dollar, which is assessed upon all males from twenty-one to sixty years of age. The effect of these stringent limitations on the suffrage was seen strikingly in the November election, when only about fifty thousand votes were cast, the normal number in a state of the same population being five times as many.

Aside from these provisions as to the franchise, the new Louisiana constitution in most respects copies closely that of 1879. It makes, however, considerable changes in the general organization and jurisdiction of the courts.

* The constitution is bound up with the session laws of 1898.

Furthermore, following the tendency shown in so many recent state constitutions, it adds largely to the already numerous provisions regulating various matters properly belonging to the domain of statute law. Such, for instance, are the new articles establishing state boards of railway commissioners, of charities and corrections, of agriculture and immigration, a state bank examiner, state and local boards of health, and prescribing their powers and duties in considerable detail. Such also are the provisions directed against the leasing out of convicts, against free passes on railways, etc., against the sale of "futures" without intention of delivery, and against combinations and pools. Pensions are to be paid by the state to all ex-Confederate soldiers and their widows who may be in indigent circumstances. Municipal debts are limited to ten per cent of the assessed valuation, and require the sanction of a majority of the taxpayers. These provisions, however, do not apply to New Orleans, whose finances are especially regulated in a long series of sections. In all local elections involving financial matters women who are taxpayers are given the ballot.

The proposed revision of the constitution of Rhode Island * would have made some improvements in the rather antiquated political institutions of the state; but the voters appear to have judged, and not without reason, that it would not satisfy the needs of the hour; while the provision that amendments must receive the approval of two-thirds of the members of two successive legislatures before coming to the people, and that conventions to revise the constitution might be summoned only at intervals of twenty years, was felt to offer little hope of progress in the future. The popular vote was accordingly heavily against the proposed constitution. The chief points in which this measure would have marked a forward step were in establishing the educational test for the suffrage, in giving the governor a veto, in making the election of representatives and officers biennial

* Laws of Rhode Island, May session, 1898, cap. 579.

instead of annual, and in somewhat decreasing the inequality of representation in the state legislature. But the old-fashioned requirement that voters in city elections must own property assessed at not less than $134 was to remain unchanged; while the new basis of apportionment would still give every town, however small, equal representation in the senate and at least one member in the lower house; and the proportion of the members of the latter body who might be assigned to any one town or city was to be raised only from one-sixth, the former limit, to one-fourth, although Providence contains more than two-fifths of the entire population of the state.

As has come to be the usual result in recent years, a large majority of the constitutional amendments voted on by the people in 1898 were rejected. In California only one out of seven was adopted, and that was of little importance, relating only to the lieutenant-governorship; while the proposition to call a convention to revise the constitution, which certainly would bear improvement, was likewise rejected. The most important of these defeated amendments was that proposing to allow counties to frame acts for their own government in the same way that cities now frame them.* General woman suffrage was voted down in Washington by a heavy majority, and in South Dakota by a slight one. In Minnesota, however, the much less radical, and indeed quite common, practice of giving women a vote in school matters and making them eligible as school officers, was introduced by a constitutional amendment, and the same privilege was granted as to elections of trustees of public libraries. Perhaps the most interesting amendments adopted by any state were those in South Dakota.† The one provides that the state, after the South Carolina fashion, shall itself exclusively carry on the manufacture and sale of

*This measure was wrongly described in my paper of March, 1898, as being a statute already put in force.

†Laws of South Dakota, 1897, caps. 38, 39.

intoxicating liquors. The other establishes the initiative and the optional referendum as to all matters of state legislation. A petition of five per cent of the voters is required in either case. A short step in this same direction was taken in Minnesota, where the provision for the local framing of city charters has been extended by requiring that any amendment to such a charter, proposed by the signatures of five per cent of the voters of the city, must be submitted to the people.* Another constitutional change made in the same state provides that hereafter amendments to the constitution must receive affirmative votes equal to a majority of all those cast for the election of state officers.† This may mean, as in Illinois, that great difficulty will be met in seeking to change the fundamental law.

A few constitutional amendments of some importance were proposed by the state legislatures in 1898, but have not yet come before the people. In New York the proposition has been submitted to the next legislature that hereafter legislative sessions shall be biennial instead of annual.‡ Recent attempts to make the same change in the few other states still retaining yearly sessions show the strength of this movement, which seems to spring mainly from distrust of our legislators. New York has also proposed an amendment prohibiting the enactment of "riders" on appropriation bills.§ The legislature of Iowa has submitted to its successor an amendment providing that all state elections shall be held on the same day as the biennial national elections; some officers are now elected in October of even years, others in October of odd years. The same state also proposed to give each county at least one representative in the lower house of the legislature.|| In Mississippi the people will be called upon to decide this year on the propo-

* Laws of Minnesota, 1897, cap. 280.
† Laws of 1897, cap. 185.
‡ Laws of New York, p. 1549.
§ *Ibid.*
|| Laws of Iowa, p. 133.

sition to make judges of the supreme and circuit courts elective by popular vote, instead of being appointive, as at present.* Virginia is moving to abandon the practice of separating local from state elections, and to hold both in November.†

Election Laws.—New measures concerning elections are for the most part of relatively slight importance, merely modifying in minor details the general ballot-reform laws adopted early in the decade. Massachusetts and Louisiana‡ have each recodified their election acts, but without important changes except that, in the latter state, the party-column ballot, facilitating straight voting, is substituted for the alphabetic arrangement of candidates' names. Ohio has followed the steps of the half dozen or more states which allow the use of voting machines. Local subdivisions may, by popular vote, adopt any machine approved by a state commission of *ex-officio* members.§

Both New York and Kentucky have passed measures tending to centralize the control of elections in the hands of the state government. The ostensible aim is to check the evils arising from the ignorance and corruption of locally chosen election officers. The real purpose is doubtless mainly party advantage. In New York || a Metropolitan Election District has been established, including Greater New York and the outlying parts of the five counties in which that city lies. The governor is to appoint, for a term of four years, a superintendent of elections for this district. This officer is to appoint each year not over six hundred deputies, in equal numbers from each of the two leading parties and on the nomination of the party committees. It is to be their business, not actually to conduct the work of registration and election, but to supervise and to investigate

* Laws of Mississippi, cap. 83.
† Acts of Virginia, cap. 690.
‡ Laws of Massachusetts, cap. 548; Laws of Louisiana, cap. 152.
§ Laws of Ohio, p. 277.
|| Laws of New York, cap. 676.

with a view to preventing and detecting fraud. Especially are they to inspect the registration lists and to oversee the registration of lodging-house voters. One deputy from each party, to be assigned by the superintendent, is to attend at each polling place during the process of balloting and canvassing. This act, which was passed at a special session of the legislature held in July, has met with strong disfavor from the Democrats and even from many Republicans, on the ground that it is an illegimate, if not indeed an unconstitutional, interference with local rights.

In Kentucky* the governor is empowered, by the new statute, to appoint three state commissioners of elections, not necessarily from different parties. These are similarly to name three commissioners for each county, who are to have general supervision over elections, including the selection of precinct officers, who must, however, be equally divided among the two leading parties. These county and state boards are given the great power of deciding election contests, except in the case of the governorship and the lieutenant-governorship, where the legislature is to decide on the basis of a trial to be held before a committee composed of three members of the upper and eight of the lower house, chosen by lot.

Primary Elections.—The recent movement seeking the much-needed reform in our nomination system continues to grow in strength. The people are coming more and more to realize both the importance and the essentially public nature of party primaries and conventions, and the tendency is to extend public control over them even further. We have already in previous papers described, among others, the laws on this subject passed in California (this was declared unconstitutional in 1898), Massachusetts and Wisconsin. These, together with an earlier measure adopted by Kentucky, form the foundation of the elaborate and stringent

*Laws of Kentucky, cap. 13.

law passed by the New York legislature last year.* This act is mandatory in all cities of over one hundred thousand people, and may be adopted in any city or village of over five thousand. Each voter at the time he registers is given an opportunity to enroll himself as an intending participant at the primaries of any one party. The sole test of his right to affiliate with the party is his own oath, to be taken in case of challenge, that he is in general sympathy with its principles and intends, broadly speaking, to support it at the coming election, and that he has not enrolled for, nor voted at any other primary within a year. The party which the voter chooses is at first kept secret, but before the day for the primary complete lists of those who have enrolled with each party are made public, and all and only such are entitled to vote at its primary. This plan may be criticised as tending to do away with the secrecy of elections, and to open the road for the application of special pressure upon individuals to change their declared intention. On the other hand, the voter of course is not bound in the election to vote for all or any of the candidates of the party first chosen, although he will naturally in most cases have enrolled with the party to which he really belongs. Moreover the thoroughness of the present system of canvassing the voters before election enables party workers to know almost as accurately what the apparent proclivities of each are as will be possible hereafter. At any rate, no other plan has yet been devised which so effectively prevents that shutting out from primaries, on various pretexts, of legitimate party members, which has done so much to put control in the hands of bosses and ward heelers.

The New York law further provides that the expense of the primary elections shall be borne wholly by the public treasury, and that they shall be conducted by the same officers who preside at general elections. All primaries are held on the same day. The party which in any given district

*Laws of New York, cap. 179.

has cast a plurality of the votes at the last election has a polling place assigned to its exclusive use, and its primary is managed by those members of the regular bi-partisan election board who belong to that party. All other parties have one joint polling place, of course with separate polls, presided over by the remainder of the election board. Any person or group may prepare ballots, but these must be in certain prescribed form and be uniform in external appearance. The voter is given by the election officers one of each kind of ballots, and selects, in a concealed booth, that which he wishes to cast. All details of voting and canvassing are carefully regulated, the provisions being for the most part similar to those controlling general elections. The method of apportioning delegates and of conducting conventions is also prescribed, though with less minuteness. Party committees in cities of over two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants must be chosen directly by the primaries, a provision tending to break up those practically closed corporations of professional politicians which have often usurped the control of party organizations.

Illinois also adopted a primary election law at a special legislative session held in 1898.* This measure applies to Chicago, and may be accepted by smaller municipalities and by counties on popular vote. It is much less drastic than the New York act, more resembling the California law of 1897. There is no previous enrollment for the primary, but any voter registered for the general election is entitled to cast his ballot on swearing that he belongs to the party, though to compel its admission, if opposed, he must secure the affidavit of two householders that he is a party member. Each party has a distinct primary on a separate day. The officers of each primary are five in number, selected by the party committee from among the regular election officers belonging to the party. The general bi-partisan election board has supervision over the primaries and conventions of

*Laws of Illinois, special session, p. 11.

all parties; it issues the calls for them, on due application; it furnishes booths, supplies, etc., the expense being entirely met by the public authorities. Ballots must all be of the same size and appearance, but there is no provision for secret selection among them, as in New York. On the contrary, each elector's name is entered on a book at the time of voting, and the same serial number is placed opposite it and on the back of his ballot, thus rendering identification possible. The object of this arrangement is double,—to prevent the stuffing of the ballot box, and to enable the detection, and the rejection of the ballots of voters who take part in the primaries of more than one party. A long list of penalties for all manner of fraud and malfeasance is incorporated in both the New York and the Illinois laws.

General City Legislation.—The New York legislature in 1898 at last adopted the bill for the government of cities of the second class (those from 50,000 to 250,000, including Syracuse, Rochester, Albany and Troy), which was framed by a special commission three years ago, and which had hitherto failed of passage.* It is probably the most carefully drawn city charter to be found in any state, and although some of its provisions will be criticised by certain classes of municipal reformers, it is interesting to observe how close is the general conformity of the law to the model charter since proposed by the committee of the National Municipal League. Legislative and executive powers are sharply distinguished, with a tendency to increase largely the authority of the mayor. The city council is to be a single board, composed of one member chosen from each ward for a term of two years, and serving without pay. A marked step in advance is that the powers of the council, which practically determine the sphere of municipal action, are not minutely enumerated and limited, as has been almost universally the custom in this country, but the council has "authority to enact ordinances, not inconsistent with the laws of the state,

*Laws of New York, cap. 182.

for the government of the city and the management of its business, for the preservation of good order, peace and health, for the security and welfare of its inhabitants and the protection and security of their property." It may even establish additional executive departments and regulate their powers. The work of the council is, however, to be confined strictly to legislation. The executive power is centred in the mayor. He appoints, without need of confirmation, all department heads save the controller, treasurer and assessors, who are elected by the people. The term of his appointees is the same as his own—two years—and he may remove them at pleasure, so that each mayor has the fullest opportunity to put into all the offices men after his own heart and to hold them strictly under his control. The various departments are each administered by a single officer, not by a board. The origination of financial measures is given to executive officers. Following the practice first introduced by New York City in 1870 and since extended to a number of cities in New York and elsewhere, an *ex-officio* board of estimate and apportionment is established, composed in this case of the mayor, controller, corporation counsel, president of the council and city engineer. The city council has power only to reduce or strike out, not to insert or increase, items in the financial estimates prepared by this board. This system seems to threaten in practice, almost completely, to undermine that control of the city legislature over the public expenditures which should, by tradition and theory, be its special prerogative. In New York City last November the council passed almost without consideration, and wholly unchanged, the budget carrying $95,000,000 which was submitted to it. Under the new law, moreover, all contracts for work and supplies are to be let by a board of almost exactly the same membership as the board of estimate and apportionment.

The charter further requires that all franchises and leases of public property shall be disposed of at auction to the

highest bidder, but the terms offered must be subsequently approved by the board of estimate. Before a franchise is opened for competition it must be favorably voted by at least three-fourths of the members of the council, while its duration is limited to fifty years.

The city of Baltimore secured last year a new charter in place of the somewhat antiquated and unsystematic one which formerly governed it.* This act is modeled in many respects on the charter of Greater New York, the very phrases used being often identical. There are two houses of the city council, members of the upper house, only nine in number, holding for four years, of the lower two years. A provision of doubtful merit, retained from the previous charter, requires members of the smaller body to own property assessed at $500, and those of the larger board property assessed at $300. The mayor, whose term is four years, appoints all leading officers, except one or two elective ones, but his action must be confirmed by the upper branch of the council. The term of such officers is the same as that of the mayor, and he may remove any of them summarily within six months after he takes office. The departments are headed in some instances by single officers, in others by boards. To insure harmony among closely allied departments, their heads are formed into a joint board, whose duties are, however, only consultative and advisory. A board of estimates is established, whose composition and control over the finances are almost precisely the same as in Greater New York. The restrictions on the granting of franchises are also borrowed from the New York law. The duration of franchises is limited to twenty-five years, though arrangements may be made for renewal, after revaluation, for twenty-five years further. The conditions and value of the franchise must be carefully considered by the board of estimates, which must approve the terms before the ordinance may be passed by the city council.

* Laws of Maryland, cap. 123.

Under the constitutional provision of California for municipal home rule in charter-making, San Francisco adopted in June, 1898, by popular vote, a charter framed by fifteen of her citizens, and it seems probable that the necessary approval of the state legislature will be forthcoming. This measure, while far short of perfection, is a great improvement on the old consolidation act, which dates from 1856, and has been amended in the most complicated fashion. It increases the board of supervisors, as the legislative body is called, from twelve to eighteen members. The optional referendum and the initiative are introduced as to both city ordinances and charter amendments, a petition of fifteen per cent of the voters being required in each case. The mayor's power is greatly increased. His veto may be overridden only by vote of fourteen of the supervisors. His appointments require no confirmation, and he can remove any appointed officer "for cause" and suspend elective officers pending removal by the supervisors. The hitherto excessive number of officers elected directly by the people is somewhat reduced, and the general organization of the executive departments is amplified in some degree. Boards of four members, holding for four years, with one member chosen annually, are placed over most departments, including that of education. Earlier laws are copied in limiting the tax-rate to one per cent, and in requiring popular approval of all loans; while a further attempt to compel economy is made by fixing the salaries and the number of employes of the various departments in a very minute manner. The most progressive features of the charter are those establishing the civil service examination system, and those dealing with municipal monopolies. It is declared to be the purpose of the city gradually to acquire its "public utilities." To this end the supervisors are required from time to time to investigate the cost of various plants, to negotiate with existing companies as to purchase of their works, and to submit propositions on the subject to vote of the people.

Grants of all franchises, except for street railways, must be approved by popular vote, and on petition street railway franchises also must be submitted to the electors. Railway grants are limited to twenty-five years, and they must be disposed of at auction to the bidder offering the highest percentage of gross receipts.

Louisiana has passed her first general municipal corporations law, in conformity with the injunction of the new constitution.* The measure, which presents few points of special interest, applies to plans hereafter incorporated, and it may be adopted, in whole or in part, by any existing city or town, subject to some control by the people through the referendum. In Ohio the governor has been empowered to appoint a special commission to suggest a uniform municipal code for the state. † It is to be hoped that this step may result in doing away to some extent with the confusion, anomaly, often absurdity of the Ohio laws governing cities and villages, which, despite the constitutional prohibition on special legislation, show that evil in its worst form.

Two or three important acts, of a less general nature than those hitherto described, have been adopted in regard to the city of Boston. Very significant is the introduction in that city also of the board of estimate and apportionment.‡ The composition of the Boston board, however, gives more room for popular influence and less for mayor-domination in the finances than would appear to be the case with those above described. It consists of the mayor, the presidents of the two boards of the council, and two other members elected by the people at large. All classes of expenditure are controlled by this board, the council having power only to reduce its appropriations. Four of its five members must concur in every action. Another law requires each political party to nominate a full ticket of twelve candidates for the

* Acts of Louisiana, cap. 136.
† Laws of Ohio, p. 302.
‡ Laws of Massachusetts, cap. 434.

board of aldermen.* Heretofore, under the provision for minority representation, which allows each elector to vote on the general ticket for only seven of the twelve members, each party, fearing lest its votes should be unduly scattered, has nominated only seven men. In this way almost no opportunity was given for selection at the polls, twelve out of fourteen candidates being sure of election. Still a third act authorizes Boston to borrow half a million dollars to establish a system of playgrounds for children.†

Street Railways.—Of greater interest than these measures is the new Massachusetts law relating to street railways.‡ This embodies the chief recommendations made in the thorough and thoughtful report of the special commission appointed in 1897 to investigate the subject. While the attitude of this body is not always consistent and will doubtless be considered unduly conservative by more advanced believers in strict public control or municipal ownership, yet the commission distinctly recognizes the paramount rights of the public over the means of transportation in cities, favoring a considerable degree of freedom for private initiative only because it believes that the best service will thus be secured. Local authorities are left wide discretion in regulating street railways, but at the same time supervision by state administrative officers, which Massachusetts has found so satisfactory in other fields, is introduced at various points. Thus if the original grant of a franchise or extension by a local authority is opposed by ten property owners along the proposed route, the state railway commissioners must be appealed to for the decision. The somewhat extreme provision which has heretofore existed, that franchises may be revoked at any time by the local authorities, is modified by requiring the approval of the railway commissioners. They, too, have the power, on petition

*Cap. 554.
†Cap. 412.
‡Cap. 578.

of the localities, to reduce rates of fare, though not thereby to lower the profits of any company to less than the average of other lines similarly situated. Street railways are hereafter to be relieved of the work of keeping the pavement between their tracks clean and in repair (except that they must remove snow and must replace pavement taken up in the reconstruction or repair of their roads). The object of this arrangement is to unify the control of the street surface, not to favor the railway companies, for they are required to compensate the municipality by a tax varying from one to three per cent of the gross receipts according to the amount of receipts per mile, and this tax may be increased by the railway commissioners if insufficient. In addition to the regular corporation tax already levied, and to this local tax, each street railway is to pay to the state an amount equal to the excess of its dividends above eight per cent, provided dividends have averaged not less than six per cent since organization. This tax is divided by the state among the municipalities in which the railway lies in proportion to mileage. Careful control of the accounts of companies and of their issues of stocks and bonds is established, with a view to preventing the evasion of this tax.

Rhode Island has copied her larger neighbor quite closely in a new law regulating her street railways.* The state tax is to be the same as in Massachusetts, save that one per cent on gross receipts is to be levied in any case; but companies are to make special arrangements with the local authorities as to other payments and obligations. The franchises of companies accepting the law cannot thereafter be revoked.

Miscellaneous General Legislation.—Space remains only for cursory mention of a few important laws not coming strictly under that class of legislation indicated by the title of this paper.

The movement for better roads, which has attained such prominence in the past few years, can scarcely be held as of

* Laws of Rhode Island, cap. 580.

less than considerable economic importance. New York has followed the example of Massachusetts, New Jersey and other states in providing for state aid and supervision in the construction of improved roads when petitioned for by local authorities.* In Minnesota also a constitutional amendment was adopted, authorizing the establishment of a state highway commission and the expenditure of state money for roads. The Torrens system of land registration continues to grow slowly in public favor; Massachusetts, after several years of legislative consideration, at last adopted it in 1898.† The work of the various state commissions from time to time appointed to confer with one another for the purpose of promoting uniformity of legislation is beginning to make itself felt somewhat. The most important result so far accomplished has been in securing the adoption by several important states, to which Maryland and Massachusetts were added in 1898, of systematic and uniform laws relating to negotiable instruments.

In its reports for 1894 and 1896 the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics showed strikingly how imperfect and unequal was the assessment of both real and personal property in that state, and especially in Chicago. An attempt was made last year to remedy these evils.‡ The *personnel* of the officials having charge of the assessment and equalization of property is somewhat changed, throughout the state. In Cook County, which includes Chicago, in place of the numerous locally chosen assessors, a board of five members, elected at large, is established, while the three members of a board of review are also to be elected by the people.

Despairing of success in raising assessments to anything like the actual value of property, the new law prescribes that the actual value shall be most carefully ascertained and that the assessment shall then be placed at one-fifth of this

* Laws of New York, cap. 115.
† Acts of Massachusetts, cap. 562.
‡ Laws of Illinois, special session 1898, p. 34.

amount. The thought is that by legalizing a definite degree of undervaluation corresponding about to the average actual undervaluation in the past, the assessments may be made somewhat less unequal in their proportion to true value, while the dignity of the law will not be so continually and universally lowered by disregard of its express commands. The tendency to levy special taxes upon corporations enjoying special privileges continues to spread. Louisiana lays new gross-receipts taxes on such companies organized outside the state; South Carolina provides for the assessment of the property of various classes of transportation companies by the state board of equalization; while Kentucky allows cities to tax the duly ascertained value of the franchises of banking, lighting and transportation corporations.* Louisiana has established a state railway commission, with large powers.

A large number of our states are coming to recognize the desirability of more thoroughly unifying the management of public charities and corrections, and are establishing state boards, which either supersede, or exercise general control over, the various officers and boards in charge of the different departments and institutions. Iowa established such a "board of control" in 1898, giving it exclusive authority over all state penal and charitable institutions, and also power of inspection over educational institutions.† The southern states are beginning slowly to seek the much-needed reform in their penal systems. We have already referred to the new constitutional provision in Louisiana prohibiting the leasing out of convicts. Georgia goes less far, but makes some advance by providing for a state farm on which women, young, old and infirm convicts are to be employed, only strong adult males being subject to lease.‡

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* Laws of Iowa, cap. 118.
† Laws of Georgia, p. 71.
‡ Acts of Louisiana, cap. 127; Laws of Kentucky, cap. 38.